

# Holes In The Sky

by redscarfninja

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Summary: In a world where she had to choose her words carefully lest she choke to death, she ought not be surprised when things don't go her way. Little did she know, the smallest, most unintentional of things could make all the differenceâ€¦ though sometimes not for the better. SELF INSERT/OC. MORE GENRES/CHARACTERS INSIDE.

## Holes In The Sky

\_\*\*INFO: \*\*This was originally posted under the title of Unfolding Time, but after a lot of thought I have decided to write it differently. It was originally going to be written in non-chronological order, but that requires a lot of planning and I could mess up somewhere, plus I will be starting university soon, so it would have been a nightmare to write. This new version will be written in chronological order, from her childhood straight into adulthood. It'll be a long-ass journey, but I'm excited to write it now that I know how I want it to progress. It was also originally written in first person, but I wanted to explore the other characters feelings/reactions in more depth, so I have switched to third person, though some of her personality will come out in my writing and sometimes it will transition into her thoughts through a sudden change to italics.\_

\_\*\*CHARACTERS: \*\*OC, Asuma, Kakashi, Gai, Obito, Rin, Genma â€“ and eventually Naruto's generation.\_

\_\*\*GENRES: \*\*Family, friendship, hurt/comfort, action, adventure, drama, angst, \*\*romance. \*\*I have emphasised romance because when I planned this story, I only had romance in mind at the time. It will take a while to come into play because they are merely children right now, but in time it shall happen. I would also like to point out that it will be a \*\*slow burning romance.\*\*\_

\_\*\*NOTE ONE: \*\*This will start out light hearted, but it will get darker. There will be blood, there will be gore, there will be

\*\*swearing/cursing \*\*and maybe smex if you would like to read some naked fun. If you don't like the sound of that, then I highly suggest you don't read it.\_

\_\*\*NOTE TWO: \*\*This story is named after a song, each chapter will be named after a song, meaning it will have a soundtrack. I have made a playlist on youtube and when I post a new chapter, I will add the next song(visit my profile for the link). It's completely optional of course, but each song will relate to the chapter, giving the chapter moreâ€| feeling.\_

\*\*\_NOTE THREE:\_\*\*\_ I'm warning you now that I write slow(I explain why in more depth on my profile). I am telling you this so you know what you're getting into if you follow. I will try my best to write as fast as I can, though. I'm eager to continue her journey  
^-^

\_\*\*DISCLAIMER: \*\*I own nothing but my oc and her foul mouth. I would also like to say that although she is a self insert, she is not me. I don't know if self inserts are actually the authors in disguise as the name suggests, butâ€| no, she is not me.\_

\* \* \*

><p><strong><span>HOLES IN THE SKY<span>\*\*

Chapter One: Rise Above This

\* \* \*

><p><em>~take the light, and darken everything around me,<br>call the clouds, and listen closely, I'm lost without you~\_

\* \* \*

><p>She had always known she had lived before. It was a feeling she had, deep inside. She had a certain awareness â€“ a sixth sense she knew she wouldn't have possessed if she had been born for the first time. She knew things no baby should have ever known without being taught. She knew how to open doors, how to clothe herself, how to go to the bathroom, though she couldn't psychically perform those acts herself. She was too young, too small and lacked the strength to be able lift things or walk, so her parents had to do it for her.<p>

But time passed and she grew older, stronger, wiser.

When she turned six months old she was able to lift a plastic spoon. She had just enough power in her hand to keep it from slipping through her fingers and although that sounds impressive, the real feat was that she knew how to use it without practice. She had been sat beside her father, who in turn sat at the kitchen table, facing her. She was strapped into a high chair and was waiting patiently for him to feed her.

"Here comes the choo choo."

It was the most delicious thing she had ever tasted in her whole six months of existence that she had to have more. It was then her patience turned to impatience because he was going so damn \_slow

\_that when he eventually brought her that choo choo she snatched the spoon from his hand with as much strength as she could muster and shoved the end into her mouth.

He reared back, shocked, eyes wide and mouth agape.

She would have laughed at his comical expression if he hadn't been holding her food hostage. He came out of his stupor when she glared at him, eyes growing wet and he quickly placed the it onto the shelf of her high chair, terrified that his wife would overhear her cries and beat him senseless for upsetting her. He then watched in amazement as she dug in, pride swelling in his chest and from that day onwards he called her his little genius and the more he said it, the more it went to her head because when she was old enough to both walk and talk, she would wear her baby blanket like a cape and toddle around the house shouting \_superbaby to the rescue! \_

She loved the attention she received when she impressed him and would make it her goal to assist her family with anything she could in the hopes of obtaining more praise. The worst part was they never let her forget it. Her brother would often tease her and would even go as far as to call her it in public. People would ask, he would tell them, they would laugh, she would get red, he would smirk and \_they \_would even go as far as to call her it, much to her chagrin.

She was at least thankful they weren't her first words â€“ that would have been even more embarrassing. She actually liked her first word â€“ loved it, even. Whenever she was with her parents they would refer to themselves as \_mama \_and \_dada \_in the hopes of one of them being it. It was sort of a competition â€“ who could say their title the most in her presence. It had started when her mother made a comment about how women were the superior gender and her, being a fellow female, would recognise her feminineness and pick her, that it was \_destiny, \_and so she was bombarded with -

\_Mama loves you.\_

\_Dada loves you, too. \_

\_Mama is going to change you now.\_

\_Dada is going to read to you now.\_

Etcetera.

So imagine their surprise when it was her \_brother's \_name, and a male no less. It happened in the garden â€“ her mother was sat against a tree with her on her lap, reading to her from a picture book. She would often point to the illustrations and make comments, but she was too young to understand and didn't really care enough to even try and process her words, so she looked elsewhere, at her father and brother.

They were doingâ€| something \_bizarre \_looking and she was very, \_very \_confused.

Her mother noticed her attention had strayed and nudged her, but when it became apparent her teachings were falling on deaf ears, she gave up.

"Stubborn child." She huffed, closing the book and then watched them with her.

They were at the edge of the garden and she couldn't for the life of her fathom what they were doing. They appeared to be flailing around in each others personal space — she had only ever seen people walk or run, so it was new to her. It was later revealed that her father had been teaching him taijutsu, but as a one year old baby who was seeing it for the first time, it was of no surprise that she began to screech when her brother received a kick to the stomach that knocked him onto his back. She had known from experience that when you fall down, you get hurt and from what she saw, he fell down \_hard, \_but in truth it wasn't that bad.

Her father had been gentle with him because he was only three and what looked like a brutal kick to her eyes was only a light tap. He toppled over with an \_oof \_and was back on his feet within seconds, uninjured and ready to continue.

Tears streamed down her cheeks and her mother tried to calm her down. She held her close, stroked her hair, whispered \_it's okay \_in her ear over and over, but she refused to listen. She was too busy grappling with her mother's arms to notice her brother's approach and it wasn't until a shadow cast over her that she became aware of his presence at her side.

She looked up and immediately ceased her wailing.

"Do you see, Asami?" Her mother said as she rubbed her arms comfortingly. "He's okay."

She leaned towards him, amazed that her big brother had survived such a thing and he shifted from one foot to the other, uncomfortable being under her intense gaze and looked off to the side, embarrassed.

Her father crouched down beside her, rested back on his haunches as he pulled his sleeve over his hand and then gently dabbed around her eyes. She gave him her best \_how dare you \_glare and reached for the hem of her brother's shirt and tugged it, sniffling, which caused him to look back down at her.

"As'ma!"

Hiruzen's hand froze.

Biwako gasped.

Silence.

Asuma's embarrassment vanished and he stared down at her in wonder, eyes flickering back and forth between her own. She tugged on his shirt once more, upset that he hadn't responded when suddenly a triumphant grin broke out onto his face and he looked up at his parents as if to say \_ha, in your face!\_

Hiruzen removed his hand and rested his arms over his knees, smiling down at her with pride before giving his wife a smug look. "What was that about women and destiny?"

Biwako glared.

That moment brought them closer together and when he wasn't training with Hiruzen, he would spend most of his time with her. They would play games, joke around and train together and from the ages three to seven, she learned taijutsu and medical ninjutsu.

Her taijutsu was mediocre at best. She just wasn't fast enough and no matter how hard she tried she could never beat Asuma, even when he went easy on her. He let her win once and it was so painfully obvious that she had wanted to scream and punch him in his stupid face. She had charged at him and his pitiful attempt at dodging was so suspiciously slow that he barely moved and she hit him in the shoulder, knocking him down. The rules were the first one to hit the ground loses and he touched his shoulder and smiled up at her in supposed approval.

She narrowed her eyes, catching onto his deceit. "Stop it!"

He feigned confusion, tone of voice all too innocent. "Stop what?"

"Stop holding back!" She stomped her foot childishly, then pointed at him. "I'll never improve if you keep doing it!"

He scratched the back of his neck, sighed and looked away, reluctance evident.

She ground her teeth together, prepared to shout some more, but then she was struck with an idea and a sly smile crept onto her face. "If you don't stop, I'll tell mother you're treating me unfairly because I'm a girl." She watched with smug satisfaction as he paled and shot to his feet, arms held out in front of himself protectively.

"Okay, okay, I'll stop!" He panicked, knowing he'd get an earful.

He never went easy on her again and even though she spent most of her time on the ground, she felt better because she had made him see her as a ninja and not some delicate little flower. It helped her taijutsu a little, but not much. She still sucked, but what she lacked she made up for in medical ninjutsu. She wasn't amazing because her chakra control needed work and she still had so much to learn, but it was something she thoroughly enjoyed and she would often spend time with her mother at the hospital to observe her work.

She became interested in medical ninjutsu when a bird had fallen out of the tree in their garden. She had been training with Asuma when she heard a thump, followed by chirping and she turned around, spotting a small, feathered lump on the grass, then stumbled forwards when Asuma landed a kick on her back.

She righted her footing and then looked back at him, aghast. "Are you blind?" She snapped, rubbing her back. "I stopped!"

His eyebrows shot up high in disbelief, then he squinted. She couldn't be serious. "Yes, you stopped!" He snapped back. "While I was in the air, mid kick!"

She whirled around, hands on hips. "You should have faster reflexes!"

She retorted with a glare.

He made a face at her hypocrisy and stepped closer, voice rising to match her own. "So should you!"

She raised her chin, looked at him through narrowed eyes, then nodded, accepting defeat. "Touch<sup>Ã©</sup>."

He let out a long, frustrated breath through his nose, then glanced behind her when he heard chirping. She spun around, suddenly remembering why she had stopped in the first place and ran towards the tree with Asuma in tow, albeit at a much slower, less caring pace.

She hunkered down in front of the bird, worried. It's wing had been damaged; it protruded at an odd angle and she reached for it, but then her wrist was seized.

"Don't touch it." Asuma commanded and when she looked up at him questioningly, he gestured towards it with a jerk of his chin. "You don't know where it's been. It could have a disease."

She yanked her wrist out of his grip, appalled and enraged by his lack of empathy for woodland creatures and scooped it up, heedless of his warning. She then stood and levelled him with a glare. "You could have a disease!" She growled, kicked him in the leg and then sped into the house, leaving him to clutch his injured appendage in peace.

She then sought out her mother and begged her to heal it. She did so without question and when that bird flapped it's wings again, it was the most rewarding feeling in the world. She then strived to be the best she could possibly be in the hopes of saving a life one day, no matter how small.

She was so happy, so content, so blessed to have such a family and so she wasn't prepared for what happened next.

That day arrived.

She never knew why she regained her memories, nor how it was possible, but they were triggered by just simply looking at something and if that was the case, why hadn't it happened sooner? Why her brother's graduation ceremony of all days?

There were potential triggers everywhere â€“ leaf headbands, kunai, shuriken.

Jutsu.

All of it, right under her nose.

She had also stumbled upon her fair share of things in her own house â€“ scrolls, open-toed boots, mesh, even her father's hokage cloak, but it wasn't triggered until she saw that mountain on that day, which made no sense because she had seen that mountain a thousand times before.

But the more she thought about it, the more she believed it to be a sign. She had a feeling it had something to do with Asuma because it

began when he walked out of those academy doors, headband tied firmly around his head. One minute she was watching him, and the next she was looking to the right, beyond the wall. She didn't know what it was that had her turning, some inconceivable force, a feeling "she wasn't sure, but when she saw those huge faces towering over her, she was hit with such an intense wave of *deja vu* that she staggered back a few steps, stunned, and bumped into her mother's side.

The feelings those faces inspired within her were so confusing and downright unbearable she wanted to die. An electric shock-like sensation buzzed inside her head, it rang loud and fleeting in her ears before it travelled down her spine. She felt paralysed, but she wasn't, not really because Biwako had put both of her hands onto her face in an attempt to meet her eyes - "Asami, what is it?" - she was pulling her head away, desperate, eyes straining as far to the right as they would go until all her mother could see was white.

Images danced before her eyes, merged with the very faces themselves and she saw things "things from a time before she was Asami Sarutobi, people she had forgotten existed, things she believed to be fiction, things from a television series and for some unfathomable reason she was in it.

She was utterly terrified and all she could do was stare up at those faces as her heart filled with so much dread she wished it had stopped beating. She believed herself to be insane, that her past self was in a coma somewhere and this was all some messed up dream her mind conjured to pass the time. She felt so helpless, so far from home that she collapsed and screamed her throat raw for her mother "the one from her first life. She couldn't remember her name, or even her face, but she remembered her presence and she needed it.

It caused quite the spectacle "nobody in the vicinity could understand why she would cry out for her mother and then push her away whenever she neared.

Upon hearing his sister's ear-piercing screams, Asuma rushed to her side. He knelt down before her, eyebrows raised in concern and touched her shoulder. "A-Asami?" He then flinched because she flinched and scrambled across the dirt away from him, arms crossed over her face and trembling like a leaf. "What happened?" He pressed, looking up at his ashen mother for answers.

She didn't respond, only stared down at her daughter in horrified shock.

He looked back at his sister, meeting her eyes as she examined him through the gap in her arms, taking in as much detail as she could to try and help her understand because suddenly her brother was Asuma Sarutobi. She was so frightened, so confused because he was fictional " wasn't he? - and her life suddenly felt like one big lie and she wanted it to end.

She then began to hyperventilate and was later taken into hospital because it escalated into a full blown panic attack. She couldn't remember the journey because she had blacked out, but when she came back to herself she stared hard at the ceiling, mind working in overdrive as she tried to decipher the puzzle that was her life. She gathered as many pieces as she could " her last moments there, her

first moments here, her old family, her new family, the series itself, but none of it seemed to fit because no matter how she looked at it, it just didn't make sense. She had been alive and well and then suddenly she was Asami Sarutobi being spoon fed by the third \_hokage\_.

Hushed voices disrupted her thoughts.

She moved her head to look at the door from where they came, but stopped short when she caught Asuma's worried, questioning gaze. She could do nothing but stare like a deer in headlights as he immediately straightened and pulled his flimsy plastic chair closer to her bedside. She took a deep, shaky breath and steeled herself for the inevitable, but when nothing happened she drew her eyebrows together in confusion â€“ she was due an interview, yet he asked no questions, instead he remained quiet and watched her with an indescribable expression that left her feeling slightly unnerved.

He looked away with a frown, torn. He had planned on asking her about it, but her fearful expression had him reconsidering, so for now he just placed his arm onto the bed, his hand inches from her own. He made no move to close the distance and there was no pressure for her to, either and her heart clenched painfully at the gesture. He would do things like that whenever she was upset and just didn't want to \_talk\_ â€“ he would reach out in subtle ways whether it be leaving his bedroom door open at night or sitting beside her as she watched the sky â€“ all of them, as different as they come, but all with the same meaning.

\_I'm here if you need me\_.

Even after witnessing something so terrible he held the questions at bay for her sake and she was thankful, so very \_thankful\_ because she wasn't ready and he knew that. Her vision blurred as she fought back tears. She didn't know how she would even begin to explain such a thing, or if he'd believe it. It then dawned on her that if this wasn't real, if this truly was a coma induced dream, then there was a chance she could wake up and although that meant she would see her mother again, it also meant she would lose him in exchange. That terrified her because figment of her imagination or not, he was still her brother in some crazy, fucked up way and she wanted him here with her and not out there with a television screen between them.

She lost the battle against her tears, they spilled over as she lifted her trembling hand from the mattress and closed the distance. She gingerly touched the back of his hand and his fingers twitched in response; he then slowly upturned it and enveloped her fingers within his own before giving them a light, reassuring squeeze.

She covered her face with her forearm and nodded into her sleeve.

\_Yes, I need you\_.

She didn't talk for a while after that; months passed by and still she hadn't spoken a word. She spent most of her time locked away inside her bedroom, ignoring her parents and life itself as she tried to come to terms with it all. The only person she didn't ignore was her brother and whenever she \_did\_ emerge from her bedroom, she would make her way to the garden and he would join her. They would sit

together in the sun and he would talk about meaningless things just to fill the silence.

She didn't respond, but she listened.

His voice was a welcome distraction from thoughts of \_her; \_his presence eased the pain in her heart and just when she thought everything would be okay, he had to leave on a mission and \_she \_would return and drag her back down into the depths of despair. She was always there, in her thoughts, her dreams and waking hours, and when she wasn't, she was waiting, and whenever Asuma went away for days at a time, she would consume her.

She would deal with it on her own as best she could, but when it got too much for her she would seek out her father. He wasn't always available because of his hokage duties, but sometimes when he learned she was outside his office he would adjust his schedule so she could sit with him. He would give her a book to read or a simple job to do and would watch her from the corner of his eye as he sifted through his paperwork. He had long given up asking questions because she remained tight lipped, so he would attempt small talk instead and although it wasn't as helpful as Asuma's, it was still better than nothing.

She just needed someone during her brother's absence and her mother from \_this \_world was out of the question, no matter how convenient her location was. She had been given time off from the academy to recover and Biwako allowed house calls so she could be with her, but she avoided her at every turn. She refused to be in her company, she felt like she was betraying \_her \_and so when her mother was distracted with a patient, she would sneak out and trek all the way to the hokage tower to escape \_both \_of them.

The first time she showed up at his office he had been furious that she had been allowed so far outside on her own, but once he calmed down and after much consideration, he believed it best for her. He had spent so much time trying to coax her out of her bedroom it was a miracle she had gotten that far without Asuma and he hated the thought of his seven year old depressive daughter wandering the village alone, so he stationed an anbu outside of their house so that whenever she went for a walk, she would have someone watching over her every step and keeping her safe.

She remained oblivious for a while, but she had her suspicions when she caught a glimpse of an anbu on the day she wandered onto one of the training grounds.

Asuma had been gone for almost a week on a mission outside of the village and it was his longest one yet. Hiruzen was up to his neck in paperwork and when he got home he was tired and she only had an hour of his time before he retired for the night. She had no one but \_her \_for company; she haunted her, her memory growing stronger every day until she couldn't take it any more. She missed her \_so much \_and she needed to feel her somehow. She needed something, \_anything, \_to bridge the gap between them, so she left the house in search of the biggest rock she could find.

She spent a good few hours roaming the streets, playgrounds and forests until she stumbled upon one of the training grounds where she spotted one at the base of a tree, half buried among the soil and

leaves. She dropped to her knees and clawed at the dirt until it was free. She didn't have the strength to lift it, so she had to drag it across the grass, inch by painful inch. She lost her breath quickly and her arms hurt with the exertion, but she refused to give up and she was so determined, so focused on her task, she didn't hear someone approach until a deep voice spoke out.

"Would you like some help with that?"

She jumped and jerked her head to the side, but kept her eyes to the ground. She didn't want to see anybody and she certainly didn't want anybody to see her, so she paid him no heed and returned her attention to the stone, hoping he would get the hint and go away, but the longer he stood, the more she realised he was not going to go away and that was proven when he broke the silence.

"You're Asami Sarutobi, right?"

Sighing, she looked up to see who dared interrupt, only to freeze when she met blue eyes. Images flashed throughout her brain once again and the longer she stared, the more familiar he became and once it was over, she was left breathless. She suddenly knew him and after a few moments of staring like a fool, she gathered her wits and gripped the rock tighter and tugged it with all her might, which made no difference whatsoever because it weighed more than her and she had stupid, weak child arms. She just had to get out of there; she felt uncomfortable being in his presence because it was Minato Namikaze and it was his training ground she was stealing a rock from and she was paranoid he's stop her.

"If you really want to move that rock, you should let me help you."

She paused.

His offer was tempting, but she was reluctant to accept because it meant something to her. She felt obligated to do it herself, but it was obvious that there was no chance she would get it home without help, so she grudgingly agreed. She stepped back to give him room and noticed he held a few scratched up kunai in his hands. It was approaching dusk and she deduced he had been training â€“ with who, she didn't know, but after a quick scan of the area she was relieved to find he was alone. He put them in his pouch, then crouched low and picked it up with ease. She balled her hands into fists, jealous that he was capable of such a feat. He then shot her an expectant look and she quickly averted her eyes, then pointed in the direction of her home.

"Alright, then."

It was then she saw the anbu. His mask was the only thing visible â€“ it resembled a monkey; a white and red speck amongst the green as he watched her from the trees behind them and she unconsciously edged closer to Minato's side. It made her nervous so she turned away, but curiosity got the better of her and she was soon turning back. She blinked, glanced around, confused. She saw nothing; he was gone and she wondered if he really had been there or if she had lost her mind after all.

She chose not to dwell on it any longer and continued her journey

homeâ€| awkwardly. She felt intimidated â€“ walking beside her was one of the most powerful ninja to ever exist, the one to become the fourth hokage and she had somehow roped him into lugging around a giant rock. She felt small, weak and pathetic in comparison and couldn't help but think why on earth would he want to help someone like her? She was convinced the people around them thought the same because she could hear whispers. She lowered her head and pretended they were not staring because if she acknowledged them, she knew she would break down and give them yet another reason to believe she was unstable.

One of the reasons included shamelessly staring at anyone who crossed her path to try and figure out if she knew them from the series. That was back when she still thought it was a dream, but as time passed it became apparent that it was indeed real and she was mortified that she had acted that way. She had no way of defending her actions, no plausible excuse for her behaviour and so she was deemed the hokage's crazy daughter. It hurt just thinking about it.

"Your father has told me a lot about you." Minato said, noticing her distress and wanting to give her a distraction.

It took her a moment to realise he was talking to her and her eyes darted towards him anxiously. This was the part where someone would attempt to pry into her life to sate their curiosity and she watched him with growing unease.

He was looking ahead with a profound expression on his face, then eyed the people around them in silent warning. Some looked away, chastised. "You have an aptitude for medical ninjutsu, which is rare for one so young."

Her eyes went wide because she hadn't expected that. She was sure he would have brought up those past months just like everybody else because that was all they chose to see, but he looked past that and praised her which was something nobody had done in a long while. He didn't know her personally, yet he went out of his way to help her and compliment her ninjutsu. She stared up at him, floored, unsure how to respond.

He glanced at her sidelong. "It's a difficult art to master and you might feel like giving up, but there may come a day when you will need it most." He looked ahead again, eyes distant. "And if that day ever comes, all that effort will have been worth it."

She looked down and mulled over his words. She didn't understand them at first because she was too wrapped up in thoughts of her, but when they came to her on one of her most frightening nights, everything suddenly became clear and she knew exactly what she had to do, even if it meant giving up a part of herself in exchange. It was one of the hardest things she had ever had to do, but she got through it because she had his other words to guide her.

"It will get better." He said as he set the rock down beside the tree in her garden.

She frowned, confused.

He pulled a cloth from his pocket and began wiping the dirt from his hands. "Things can get painful and not everybody with understand

you," his eyes grew serious, "but the light will shine again." His eyebrows knit together as if he was the one experiencing such a pain. "You just have to look for it. It's there, I promise you." He held out his cloth and when she took it from his hands, she knew she would never forget that moment for as long as she lived. He changed her life with those words, though they didn't take effect right away because she was too far gone with grief, but when they did they changed her life for the better and she would never be able to repay that debt.

Biwako had watched the whole exchange from the porch and before he left, he gave her a wave to which she nodded in return. She didn't move from her position, but she regarded her daughter with studious concern and Asami stormed into the house, no longer wanting to be under her scrutinising gaze. She had something more important to do, so she fetched a bucket of water and a sponge from the kitchen and when she re-entered the garden, Biwako was still there. She could feel her watchful eyes on her back as she scrubbed the stone and she exhaled angrily through her nose because she didn't want her there. She didn't want her to \_see\_ and when Biwako finally retreated into the house, her shoulders relaxed.

Once the stone was free of grime, she decorated it with flowers and sat in front of it every day.

She knew her mother wasn't dead, she was just in a different universe, but she may as well have been because she was forever out of her reach. It wasn't really her grave, she knew that. It didn't bring her closer to her, either, but she needed to hold onto that thread between them, so she kidded herself into believing she was right there, beside her. She was so immersed in that rock the following weeks that nobody could pull her away from it, not even Asuma. She had forged a connection and was unwilling to give it up, so she sat before it day after day, rearranging flowers and carving things onto the surface. She had inscribed \_I miss you\_ ringed with hearts and kisses. She was unable to write \_mother\_, \_her hand\_ wouldn't let her and she thought it down to grief, but she soon found out that it most definitely was \_not\_.

Higher forces were at work; the cruel fate the universe bestowed upon her only got more cruel when she discovered her handicap. It was revealed when she spoke again for the first time. She was sat in front of the stone, weaving flower stems into a braid when she heard Asuma sigh from the porch. It had gotten too much for him to see her fall so far and he couldn't keep the questions to himself any longer. He had reached his limit and she didn't blame him â€“ if the situation had been reversed she would have done the same.

He sat down beside her and asked the question everybody had been thinking. "Asamiâ€| what \_is\_ \_this\_?"

He looked at her and she eventually looked back with pained eyes because that one question, from him, did it. She couldn't keep quiet any more, she needed to talk to someone about it even if there was a chance they didn't believe her. She spoke for the very first time in months and his eyes widened at the sound, unable to believe she had finally broken her silence, but then they were wide with worry when she began gasping.

"This is my-"

There was a sudden pressure in her throat " she felt like she was holding her breath and trying to talk at the same time, and the only way she could breathe again was when she stopped trying. She clutched her throat, face growing red from the effort and stared at him in shock.

He sat up and grabbed her shoulders to keep her steady. "Whoa, hey- what's happening?" He asked, stricken.

When she caught her breath, she tried again. "This is my-"

The pressure returned and no matter how hard she tried to say \_this is my mother's grave, \_the words wouldn't come out. That along with her inability to even write \_I miss you mother \_set off warning bells in her head. The universe didn't want anybody to know she had a past life and that she knew their future. If she tried to speak about it, she lost her ability to breathe. If she tried to write about it, her hand was held back by an invisible force. She was trapped inside her head and that brought her down even further. She crashed into Asuma's chest and sobbed into his shirt because in that moment, she realised she was alone in this. Nobody would know of her inner turmoil, nobody would know what lay beneath the surface, nor the reason behind her tears " they would live in blissful ignorance and \_they \_would be okay, she had thought resentfully.

She also discovered at a later time that she was unable to speak about things she knew from the series until it was spoken aloud by someone else or she read it from a book, because \_this \_her wouldn't have known about it. It remained caged inside until somebody came along with that piece of knowledge and unlocked it, allowing her to speak freely without the fear of being choked to death and she hated every minute of it.

She got used to it, though.

She got \_better\_.

But when it happened for the first time in that garden, she spiralled lower than she ever had before and even contemplated taking her own life, but was stopped by a dream " or more accurately, a \_nightmare\_.

It began on a beautiful, sunny day and there was a man. His skin was pitch black with white markings that resembled a skeleton. He stood above a symbol drawn in blood and he was laughing manically. It was terrifying, truly a horrible sound and then he impaled himself and then suddenly he was \_Asuma, \_bleeding from a fatal wound to the heart under a shower of rain and she started awake.

Even with her eyes open she saw nothing else, heard nothing else; his laughter rang in her ears as her brother's blood mixed with the rain and she grew nauseous, pale like the sheets around her. She peeled them from her damp skin and clambered out of bed before making her way to the door on unsteady legs. She fumbled for the handle, desperate to escape that horrid sound and when she entered the hall, it only got louder. By the time she reached Asuma's already open door, she was crying and she increased her pace until she was at his bedside. He was sprawled on his back and was snoring obnoxiously and she crept onto the mattress. It dipped under her weight, rousing him

from his sleep and he peered at her through half closed eyelids.

His voice was scratchy from sleep and he rolled onto his side to face her. "Hmm? Can't sleep again?"

A lump rose in her throat. "Something like that."

He scooted over to make room and lifted his arm. She lay down beside him and snuggled into his embrace, buried her face into his chest and inhaled his scent, then released a long, calming breath. He was there and he was okay.

"\_There may come a day when you will need it most, and if that day ever comes, all that effort will have been worth it.\_"

She understood what Minato meant, then. His words rang true and it occurred to her that Asuma may have been the reason why she wanted to become a medic in the first place. It was a possibility that his death lingered within her subconscious mind and it refused to let him die, forcing her to train hard to save a life she hadn't known was in danger until that night. She laid awake for hours, mind reeling before she was eventually lulled to sleep by the steady beating of his heart.

The next day, she could think of nothing else â€“ not even her. She was lost to her, she knew that. Asuma, however, was not. She didn't want to lose him, too. He was her world, her anchor and that was the moment she decided to change herself. She had to train, had to bring herself back from the edge and prove that she was not crazy and that she could become just as good a ninja as anyone else. She had to become strong because she refused to let another person exit her life and in order for her to reach her goal, she had to let her go. She had to stop living in the past, so she did what was necessary and strode into that garden with a hammer in her hand. It took her a while to pluck up the courage, but when his face as he lay dying drifted to the fore of her thoughts, she snapped.

She slammed the hammer down onto the rock, over and over, severing the thread between them until there was nothing left but pebbles and dust. The silence that followed was disturbed by her harsh breathing only and she closed her eyes to accept what she had just done, mentally said her goodbyes and then turned around and walked away â€“ away from her past self and away from her.

"\_The light will shine again. You just have to look for it. It's there, I promise you.\_"

She entered the house with a small, forced smile and a lone tear rolling down her cheek.

I hope so.

She gradually healed, driven by her undying need to save her brother and the first step was opening up to her family again. It was hard, it was awkward â€“ with her mother especially, but she needed her if she was to improve her skills as a medic. She felt ashamed because that was the only reason she had to talk to her at the time and when she did, Biwako stopped what she had been doing instantly and stared at her with such intensity she began to sweat. She took a nervous step backwards, losing confidence with each passing second.

"What did you just say?" Her mother asked, not quite believing her ears.

Asami fiddled with the hem of her shirt. "Hi..." She looked off to the side, red faced, then looked back when she got no response.

Biwako donned an unguarded expression and Asami could see it all â€“ shock, disbelief, \_hope â€“ before she masked them and cleared her throat. "Hi." She said evenly, placing her hands on her lap.

Bolstering her courage, she forced herself to continue. "So, I wanted to- I was just, uh, that is- I need to-" She wanted to slap herself because she sounded like a complete \_moron, \_but Biwako seemed to know what she wanted to say because she rose to her feet and took a few cautious steps towards her.

Asami resisted the urge to flinch when she neared and when she looked up into her eyes, she squared her shoulders. For Asuma. "I wanted to say that I'm okay, and that I'm sorry." She said quietly, looking away, expression rueful.

She didn't respond again, so she chanced a peek up at her.

She was looking down at her long and hard and just as she was about to excuse herself because she was making her uncomfortable, Biwako pulled her into a hug so fierce she could barely breathe. Surprise flared throughout her entire nervous system and she pushed against her in an attempt to free herself â€“ she was going too fast, she wasn't ready and before she could do something she would regret, she held her head close to her chest and scolded her.

"You silly, silly child." Her firm tone was laced with the unquestionable love of a mother and she stilled. She had been too absorbed in her own issues that she had stopped seeing her as the mother she was and her arms fell to her sides at the revelation. All she could see was the beige material of her gown as she held her to her heart and she was unable to stop the tears from spilling over as several months worth of guilt built up inside her. She didn't hug her back, she was too stunned to do anything but stand like a lifeless doll in her arms.

The hope they had of rekindling their relationship was nothing but a pipe dream, but they were making progress. It hadn't returned to how it used to be, but she no longer left the room when she entered which was an improvement. She was too ashamed of herself to fully reach out to her should she reject her and she knew that train of thought was total bullshit, but she was a paranoid person. She was nervous around her, unable to act like a normal human being in her presence and there should be a reward for the amount of times one says hi in an awkward manner.

Asami got back into the habit of observing her work and when she thought she was ready, she resumed her teachings. She begged her father to let her back into the academy, but he shot down that notion fast. It had only been a few weeks since she came back out of her shell and he was unsure as to whether it was a temporary thing or not, but after badgering him consistently for hours on end, he agreed

that if she spoke about it no more and showed signs of improvement, he would consider her request. She asked for books in the meantime â€“ ones like they had in the academy, so that if he did allow her to return she wouldn't be out of the loop.

She read, trained and healed under their vigilant eyes and word of her recovery had gotten out because her best friend came to visit. She had stopped by a thousand times before, but she had put her along with everything else on the back burner, so she didn't even think to respond. Her friend was told that she wasn't ready to see anybody, but when she walked back into her life, she wished she had been. She didn't realise how much she missed her until she saw her again.

It was late afternoon and she was sitting in her bed, reading one of her books when her mother's voice sounded from the bottom of the stairs.

"Asami, your friend is here to see you. Should I send her up?"

She tossed her book aside and sprang out of bed, stumbling a little when her legs got caught in her sheets. "Y-Yes!"

Her friend was at her door within seconds. She saw her shadow shift through the crack before she pushed it open and peeked inside, and the second she did she was assaulted by another sequence of images when she saw her face and she fought to remain impassive throughout its entirety.

It was another inconvenient quirk the universe dumped on her â€“ even though she knew people from this world, she didn't remember the majority from the series until she laid eyes on them again and only remembered the minority through a chain reaction; people she hadn't met were interwoven within the memories she received about someone \_else \_and each encounter unlocked one after the other and sometimes not at all. There were people she had seen many times over, yet their true identity remained unknown, only to be revealed at a later time or never and if she did remember, she didn't remember everything. Their stories revealed themselves in time, much like the nightmare she had of Asuma's death, to which she learned the identity of his killer through said chain reaction.

It was soon over and she furrowed her brow, looked her up and down because her best friend Rin was \_Rin \_and she couldn't believe it.

Rin closed the door with a click and then came no further, unwilling to fully enter her domain lest she change her mind and send her away. "Remember me?" She teased with a shy, hesitant smile.

Asami inwardly scoffed at her poor choice of words because yes, she did, but not in the way she would think. She then pushed her sudden knowledge to the back of her mind because screw the series, she was her friend first and foremost and she needed to apologise for virtually forgetting her during her harrowing lapse.

Her face was a mix between shame and guilt and she stepped forwards, outstretched her arm. "Rin..." She trailed off, not sure how to proceed, but then Rin charged at her, wrapped her arms around her neck and knocked the wind right out of her. She staggered back a few steps from the impact.

"I heard you were doing better." Rin spoke softly. "And I thought- I thought maybe you'd want to see me this time."

There was a stab of pain in her heart.

\_Oh, Rin\_.

She had caused that insecurity within her and she longed for a chance to go back in time and prevent it. She would have done so many things differently had she known the outcome and saved so many people from heartache.

Rin pulled away and Asami was moved to see tears. "You're okay now?" She asked hopefully with a vulnerable gleam in her eye and she \_hated herself\_.

She nodded once. "I'm okay, I'm fine." She touched her arm gently, reassuringly.

Rin laughed and hugged her again, even tighter than before. "Welcome \_back\_." She whispered and after a few unresponsive seconds, she returned the embrace, tears forming in her own eyes.

"Yeah." She said dumbly, voice thick with emotion. "I'm back."

Time went on like it always had and before she knew it, a year had passed since the day that started it all and she was \_fine\_. She still thought of \_her, \_of course she did, but it didn't blind her to everything else any more. She was herself again, she had healed and Hiruzen finally allowed her to return to the academy. She had grown stronger both mentally and psychically and he could see that. It took a little over a month to pass the exam â€“ it was a challenge, but she had trained hard, motivated by her brother and her brother alone and when she passed, she had at last taken her first steps into ninja-hood and was a step closer to her goal.

She graduated on the same day as Rin and was no longer required to attend classes because she would be training with her team and sensei instead, for which she was grateful because her second time in the academy wasn't that great.

People avoided her like the plague and she was often a victim of bullying.

\_Don't get too close, you'll catch her crazy\_.

She retained a blank expression through it all, but it was tearing her up inside. It escalated rather quickly and the only people to come to her defence were Rin and Obito. He would threaten to kick their asses if they didn't back off and even got into a few fights and she was touched that he cared enough to go through pain for her. She had hoped to be on their team because she loved them dearly, but she had spent enough time around them that she had seen visions of Kakashi entwined within their stories. She remembered that \_he \_was on their team and she deflated, upset because it meant she would have to be on a team with two people in that room and she disliked them all, but the hope still remained.

She leaned forwards in anticipation when the teacher read out their

names, then sighed, miserable all of a sudden. Her deduction had been correct and she loathed the idea of being on a team with anybody in her current proximity, but when her name was called and her team was revealed, she didn't know how to feel at first.

"Asami Sarutobi," the teacher called out and she heard a few snickers, followed by good luck to her team and Obito silenced them with a glare, "you're with Might Gai and Genma Shiranui."

She made a confused face.

Who?

She vaguely remembered someone in a jumpsuit, but she had never spoken to him. Genma, she hadn't a clue, but she was okay with it because at least it wasn't anybody in that room.

"Please go to your assigned rooms." The teacher ordered. "Those of you who are missing members will find them there."

When she found her assigned room, nothing could have prepared her for what she found inside, or who when memories of him spread throughout her brain with youthful vigour. She opened the door and was greeted by two pairs of curious eyes, one pair more so.

She swallowed and slid the door closed behind her. "...Hi."

"Hey." Genma replied casually as he chewed a senbon.

She didn't remember him, but the first thought that popped into her head was that he looked cool and before she could think any more, there was a sudden flash of green in her eye. She jumped because Gai was suddenly in her face and she backed up against the door, startled and when he reached for her hand she heard a voice distantly in the back of her mind screaming youth and oh my fucking god.  

"Asami Sarutobi." He smiled broadly. "It's a pleasure to meet you." He brought her hand to his lips and she was too caught off guard to respond because she was on a team with Gai. He didn't comment on her silence, instead he dragged her away from the door. "Come, sit." He pushed her down onto a seat and then plopped down next to her. "My name is Might Gai." He put a thumb to his chest, then gestured behind her. "And this here is Genma Shiranui." She threw him a friendly smile over her shoulder, but turned back just as fast when Gai's voice almost ruptured her eardrums. "We are honoured to have you on our team."

She eyed him dubiously. She couldn't tell if he was being genuine or lying to spare her feelings because nobody wanted her on their team, so why would they? Then again, from what she remembered he was a nice guyâ€| weird, but nice.

She didn't have time to spare it a second thought because the door opened and in walked an enormous man with long, spiky red hair. She straightened in her seat, tensed when his eyes landed on her, but relaxed a second after because his smile was kind.

"Asami, welcome to our team. Your father has told me a lot about you." Apparently, her father talked about her a lot. "We have been waiting for a third member to complete our team for a while now and

we're happy to have you."

"Y-Yeahâ€| thank you." She said quietly, looking down at the table.

He introduced himself as Choza Akimichi and once he was done with his speech, he instructed them to meet at training ground three the following morning at 9am, and then they were dismissed. She was eager to leave so she could show Asuma her headband, so she uttered out a quick nice to meet you \_and then fled the room. She was halfway down the hall when Rin emerged from her assigned room, followed by the rest of her team and when Minato spotted her, his expression turned soft.

He closed the door behind them all and approached her.

"Congratulations on making genin, you've come a long way."

Rin and Obito looked at each other quizzically and she blushed, too embarrassed to do anything but smile and nod bashfully as he placed a hand on her shoulder.

"Your family will be proud." His smile was warm, sincere and she was disappointed when he had to go. She watched him walk away with admiration, then turned back with a smile on her face, but it soon gave way to startled confusion when she noticed all eyes were on her, including her own team mates as they weren't that far behind her when she left.

She fidgeted, eyes darting to the ground and back. "What?"

"How do you know our sensei?" Obito asked, befuddled, head tilting to the side slightly.

"Oh, I've only met him once." She scratched the back of her neck, eyes downcast. "He helped me with something, that's all."

Obito opened his mouth to ask another question, but Rin grabbed his arm and he looked down at her, blushing and newly distracted. "So," \_she said loudly, cutting him off, "where are you going to wear your headband, Asami?"

Asami gave her a tiny, appreciative smile and then dropped her eyes to the headband in her hands. She brushed her fingers over the metal plate, thumb tracing over the leaf symbol and she felt great. She had made it; all that hard work hadn't been for nothing and she would change Asuma's destiny, even if it killed her and nobody could deter her from her path.

"Are they making anyone a genin these days?"

Her mind slowed to a crawl and she looked up to see Rin moving aside, revealing her other team mate. He was leaning against the wall, arms crossed with hooded, bored looking eyes.

Her forehead wrinkled. "Pardon?"

Rin turned towards him, voice gentle but with a warning edge.  
"Kakashi, that's not-"

"People with weak minds have no place in the ninja world." He looked

away and out of the window to their side with disinterest.

"Kakashi!" Rin hissed, appalled.

"Hey, what the hell is your problem?!" Obito yelled and stood to his full height, an inch or two taller than Kakashi, but he wasn't intimidated because he spared him an unconcerned glance and then returned his attention to the window.

"If you can't follow orders with a clear mind, you'll be nothing but a useless burden."

It was as if he was commenting on the weather and not insulting a person's mental state. Heat surged through her veins and in a sudden burst of rage, she advanced towards him and the split second he turned back she raised her fist and slugged him across the jaw. She wasn't strong enough to actually knock him over, but his head jerked to the side a fraction and that was satisfying in itself. He touched his jaw, eyes wide as the silence in the hallway became deafening. Nobody could quite believe what she had just done â€“ to him, of all people.

His black eyes never wavered from her own as he stared down at her in stunned disbelief. She channelled all of the hate she had into her brown ones and stared right back at him. She refused to look away, refused to show weakness to that arrogant little prick. She had never felt such an overwhelming rage before â€“ an unpleasant heat crept up her neck until she was red in the face, her breathing became heavy and she wanted to kill him. She wanted to kill him and grab him by his stupid hair and fling him into space.

The occupants of the hallway exchanged tense glances; no one dared to break the silence, it stretched long and wary, until someone did. Obito had been holding in laughter the entire time and had reached his breaking point. He bent forwards and clutched his stomach, tears brimming under his eyes as he pointed at him.

"Oh man, she got you good!"

He didn't react â€“ his attention was solely on her and their eyes remained locked even when Gai touched her arm and pulled her back a step. She had grown used to unkind words ever since that day â€“ it was a given, rumours spread fast and children could be cruel, but none of that compared to what he had just said. She shrugged off Gai's hand and stepped forwards so her face was inches from Kakashi's. He narrowed his eyes, hand falling away from his jaw and glared at her.

"I am not weak." She spat venomously and unable to stand the sight of him any longer, she turned away and strode down the hall. She raised her head high and did not look back. She would make him eat his words. She would not be a burden and she would prove it to the world.

"Kakashi, that was cruel!" Rin scolded, then jogged to catch up, but Asami didn't slow her pace.

She would show him.

She would show them \_all\_.

\* \* \*

><p><em>~call your name every day when I feel so helpless,<em>

><em>I've fallen down, but I'll rise above this~<em>

\* \* \*

><p><em><strong>USEFUL INFORMATION:<strong>\_

\_\*\*1. \*\*\_\_If you are ever curious to my progress on the next chapter and future updates, check my profile whenever you like. I have created a section which will have the current word count of a chapter I am writing and I will update it every one or two days when I write more.\_

\_\*\*2. \*\*\_\_My friend pointed something out to me and I thought I should mention it. I have not forgotten Asuma has a nephew in canon(Konohamaru) â€“ things will be revealed in time.\_

\_\*\*3. \*\*I have also not forgotten Inoichi and his mind jutsu exists - again, things will be revealed in time.\_

\_\*\*4. \*\*\_\_ There is another song and although it does not relate to the happenings in this chapter, there are a few verses that do, so I will quote them here.\_

\* \* \*

><p><em>~I have all of these memories, I don't know what for<br>\_\_I have them and I can't help it

><em>\_some overflow and spill out like waves,

><em>\_some I will harbour for all of my days~\_

\* \* \*

><p><strong><em>STORY SONG:<em> \*\*\_Holes In The Sky by HAIM.\_

\_\*\*CHAPTER SONG: \*\*Rise Above This by Seether.

><em>

\*\*\_OTHER SONG(LINK NOT ON PROFILE): \_\*\*\_Like The River by Sun Kil Moon. \_

\_redscarfnninja\_

End  
file.